Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 5, line 5, with the following rewritten paragraph:

F 1

—Figure 1 is a block diagram of an exemplary prior art multi-layered communication network which can be used in implementing an embodiment of the invention;—

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 5, line 15, with the following rewritten paragraph:

F 2

—Figure 6 is a block diagram of an exemplary prior art computer system on which the invention may be implemented and practiced.—

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 6, line 23, with the following rewritten paragraph:

F 3

—Figure 1 illustrates an example of prior art multi-layered communication network 100 to which the invention is applicable. In general, multi-layered communication network 100 includes multi-layered nodes 102, 104, communicatively coupled by transmission medium 106. Although multi-layered communication network 100 may resemble the International Standards Organization (ISO) Open Systems Interconnection (OSI) Reference Model (RM), the invention is applicable to any multi-layered communication network.—

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 13, line 13, with the following rewritten paragraph:

–Figure 6 is a block diagram of an exemplary prior art computer system 600 upon which an embodiment of the invention may be implemented. Computer system 600 includes a bus 602 or other communication mechanism for communicating information, and a processor 604 coupled with bus 602 for processing information. Computer system 600 also includes a main memory 606, such as a random access memory (RAM) or other dynamic storage device, coupled to bus 602 for storing information and instructions to be executed by processor 604. Computer system 600 also includes a read only memory (ROM) 608 or other static storage device coupled to bus 602 for storing static information and instructions for processor 604. A storage device 610, such as a magnetic disk or optical disk, is also provided and coupled to bus 602 for storing information and instructions.–

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel claims 21, 25 and 33.

Please amend the claims as follows:

2.   (Twice Amended) The method of Claim 1, further including the steps of

a)   performing a communication protocol layer specific encryption of [the] data [on] to be sent across the communication channel at the first network node, and

b)   performing a communication protocol layer specific decryption of [the] data [on] received from the communication channel at the second network node.